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REAL. FAIR. ACCURATE.

NU ATHLETIC DIRECTOR VOWS 'FULL-FLEDGED' SEARCH FOR NEW COACH;

MOOS SAYS HE HAS SIX CANDIDATES IN MIND, SCOTT FROST AMONG THEM

AS ONE RIDE ENDS, NEW ERA BEGINS

RYAN SODERLIN/THE WORLD-HERALD

Mike Riley, with wife Dee and athletic department employee Chris Brasfield, leaves Memorial Stadium on Saturday after talking with reporters about his firing.

An upbeat Riley says farewell; Moos frank about expectations

By Sam McKewon

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

LINCOLN — Decked head to toe in Husker gear, Mike Riley shook hands with reporters Saturday as if he'd just been hired as Nebraska's new football coach.

Instead, NU Athletic Director Bill Moos had fired Riley after three years and a 19-19 record, including a 4-8 campaign in 2017, the worst Husker season in more than a half-century. Moos, hired in October, assessed Riley's program over the last five games. NU finished 1-4 and suffered three blowout losses, culminating in Friday's 56-14 loss at the hands of Iowa.

The firing — which became official around 10 a.m., after Moos had met with Riley and assistant coaches at Memorial Stadium — was not a surprise. All assistants except for linebackers coach Trent Bray, whom Moos installed as interim head coach, were immediately dismissed. One assistant, offensive line coach Mike Cavanaugh, left the football offices with a box on his shoulder. Riley, due a contract payout of $6.6 million, was rancor-free and upbeat in his farewell.

"I'm looking forward to being a granddaddy, and then we'll see what the future brings," the 64-year-old Riley said.

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BY THE NUMBERS

19-19

Mike Riley's record in three seasons as Nebraska's coach

$13.1 million

Total of what NU still owes Bo Pelini ($6.5 million), and Mike Riley ($6.6 million)

4

Number of head football coaches at Nebraska since 2003

3

Number of head football coaches at Nebraska from 1962 to 2003

Commentary, reaction, timeline of Mike Riley's three years at NU. **More in Sports**

Complete coverage of the search for a new Husker coach. **Omaha.com/rileyfired**

Next coach likely to cost 'pretty big dollars' for NU

By Rick Ruggles

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln most likely will dish out plenty of cash for the next fellow it hires to be its football coaching savior.

Husker coach Mike Riley received $2.9 million a year — a lot of money to normal souls, but given the runaway salaries of college football coaching, it placed him only 41st among collegiate head coaches, according to USA Today.

The Huskers acquired Riley on the cheap, paying him less than it had paid predecessor Bo Pelini, who made $3.08 million in base salary his last year. Don't expect that to happen this time.

Coaches increasingly are viewed as the bearers of state aspirations, win whisperers with the charisma to recruit stars and the smarts to out-scheme others on the field. College football coaches' contracts often refer to the job as "unique," requiring "special talents and skills." Further, a head coach should maintain "high moral and ethical standards," the contracts say.

With the pressure of carrying a state's hopes and dreams comes compensation. Alabama coach Nick Saban, a winner of multiple national cham-

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A role in sailors' release

An Offutt crew provided intelligence after the capture of two U.S. Navy boats by Iran in 2016. **Midlands**

Big night for NU volleyball

With a Senior Night sweep of Iowa, Nebraska clinches a share of the Big Ten championship. **Sports, 3C**

Primary care and manicures

A local independent clinic offers its own twist on the patient-centered medical home concept. **Money**

Omaha forecast

High: 59 — Mild with sunshine

Low: 36

Details: 10B

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Payne on 'Downsizing,' Dundee and more

You might know that Alexander Payne is an Oscar-winning filmmaker from Omaha.

And you might know that he has a new sci-fi comedy coming out Dec. 21. That it's called "Downsizing," and that it's about a couple (Matt Damon, Kristen Wiig) who decide to shrink themselves.

And you might also know that that movie was partially filmed in Omaha. And that various locations were shot. And that "Downsizing" will give Payne's hometown one of its biggest cinematic platforms ever.

But did you know that Payne had to re-create the interior of Creighton Prep and La Casa Pizzaria in Toronto? And did you know that Payne and his wife and newborn baby are moving to Omaha?

And did know that Payne owns the building that previously housed Omaha's oldest restaurant, King Fong, and that he has plans for the Chinese eatery's resurrection?

We caught up with Payne to talk about his new movie, the soon-to-reopen Dundee Theater and why he's eager to move back to Omaha.

READ THE ALEXANDER PAYNE STORY ON PAGE 1E